

if you can't get what you love by TolkienGirl

Category: Stranger Things, 2016

Genre: Angst, Drama

Language: English

Characters: Steve H.

Status: Completed

Published: 2017-11-06 23:23:23

Updated: 2017-11-06 23:23:23

Packaged: 2019-12-17 04:45:20

Rating: K+

Chapters: 1

Words: 306

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: Falling in love is remarkably easy. Falling requires no effort, only direction. [Steve, post S2]

if you can't get what you love

Falling in love is remarkably easy. Falling requires no effort, only direction.

He's always fumbled his way around compasses, doesn't know truth north until the first time he sees Nancy Wheeler laugh.

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It's okay, Nance.

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When it comes to the beginning, or maybe to the end—if the end will ever come—he just doesn't know what he wants.

He thought he did.

He thought he wanted everything.

Turns out, *everything* is a painfully wide request.

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Fear only catches up to you if you keep running. Once he ran, out of a house and away from the light, and he found that he'd rather just go back inside and die with the girl he loved and kid who was going to take her from him.

He didn't know *that*, then.

(He'd do it all over again.)

.

People run. Even when you stand and fight, you still run at night, in dreams, and sometimes in the daylight, when people around you don't know anything.

And the fear catches you then.

(But if you just wake up, wake up, *run toward the monster*—
—it lets you go)

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"You seem different, lately," his mom says. She says this after the bruises heal, after the memories start fading. Sometime in February or something. "Is anything the matter?"

Only that less than a dozen people in Hawkins have the right kind of nightmares.

Only that Nancy Wheeler and Jonathan Byers are the new item of Hawkins High—and worse still, he is happy for them.

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It's okay, Nance.

He waits a beat, and smiles at his mom, because when all is said and done, he does love her. Sometimes he loves her more when she isn't around. He thinks that runs both ways. "Everything's great."

"College?" she asks, hopeful.

"Yeah," he says.

(He stops running.)